



All eyes on airlines as July Fourth holiday weekend nears



People wait in a TSA line at the John F. Kennedy International Airport on Tuesday, June 28, 2022, in New York.

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All eyes on airlines as July Fourth holiday weekend nears

By DAVID KOENIG

DALLAS (AP) — Airlines that have stumbled badly over the last two holidays face their biggest test yet of whether they can handle big crowds when July Fourth travelers mob the nation's airports this weekend.

Problems were popping up well before the weekend, with some disruptions caused by thunderstorms that slowed air traffic.

American Airlines canceled 8% of its flights on Tuesday and Wednesday, and United Airlines scrubbed 4% of its schedule both days, according to FlightAware.

Holiday revelers planning to drive face their own set of challenges, including high gasoline prices. The nationwide average has eased



Off-duty Delta Air Lines pilots picket at Salt Lake City International Airport Thursday, June 30, 2022, in Salt Lake City.

Associated Press

since hitting a record \$5.02 in mid-June to \$4.86 a gallon on Thursday, according to AAA, which expects prices to continue to ease because of rising gasoline inventories.

Americans are driving a bit less. Gas demand last week was down about 3%

from the same week last June, according to government figures. In a Quinnipiac University poll in June, 40% of those surveyed said gas prices have caused them to change their summer vacation plans.

Air travel in the U.S. is almost back to pre-pandem-

ic levels. Since last Saturday, an average of nearly 2.3 million people a day have gone through airport checkpoints — down just 8% from the same days in 2019. If that trend continues through weekend, records will be set for flying in the pandemic era.

Airlines may not have enough planes and flights to carry all of them, especially if there are cancellations due to weather, crew shortages or any other reason.

"Airlines are learning the hard way that there is a severe price for over-optimism," said Joseph Schwieterman, a transportation expert at DePaul University. "They are on the edge of a cliff this holiday."

Schwieterman calculates that airlines have little cushion between the number of travelers expected to fly this weekend and the flights they plan to operate — if all goes well. Any disruptions could cause chaos because planes are booked full — there will be no empty seats on later flights to accommodate stranded travelers.

Airlines have been caught short-staffed as they try to hire thousands of workers, including pilots, to replace those who they encouraged to quit when the pandemic caused air travel to plummet.

Many of them, including Delta, Southwest and Jet-Blue, have trimmed summer schedules to reduce stress on their operations. They are using larger planes on average to carry more passengers with the same number of pilots. Those steps haven't been enough so far this summer.

Delta Air Lines took the unusual step this week of warning travelers that there could be problems over the holiday weekend.

The Atlanta-based airline said it expects the biggest crowds since 2019, and this will create "some operational challenges." It is allowing passengers booked on flights between Friday and the Monday holiday to change their schedule at no cost, even if the new

flight comes with a higher fare.

"Delta people are working around the clock to rebuild Delta's operation while making it as resilient as possible to minimize the ripple effect of disruptions," the airline said.

Delta had by far the most canceled flights of any U.S. airline over the Memorial Day holiday stretch, when U.S. carriers scrubbed nearly 2,800 flights, and again last weekend, when it canceled 7% of its flights, according to FlightAware.

The airlines are increasingly trying to blame delays on understaffing at the Federal Aviation Administration, which manages the nation's airspace and hires air traffic controllers.

"This year versus previous years, the biggest issue has been air traffic control," said Barry Biffle, the CEO of Frontier Airlines.

"We've made a lot of steps to avoid the Jacksonville center in our scheduling, and we have reduced some flying to accommodate that."

The FAA has a major facility in Jacksonville, Florida, that handles many flights up and down the East Coast. After a meeting with airline representatives in May, the FAA promised to increase staffing at the center.

Delta CEO Ed Bastian similarly blamed the FAA during an online meeting with employees Wednesday, trade publication Airline Weekly reported. Delta declined to comment.

Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg pushed back earlier this week when the head of the trade group Airlines for America blamed the FAA for delays.

"The majority of cancellations and the majority of delays have nothing to do with air traffic control staffing," Buttigieg told "NBC Nightly News."

Helane Becker, an airline analyst for investment firm Cowen, said there are many reasons for the disruptions including weather, FAA ground stops that last too long, and flight crews hitting their legal limit of working hours in a day. □

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Jackson sworn in, becomes 1st Black woman on Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ketanji Brown Jackson was sworn in to the Supreme Court on Thursday, shattering a glass ceiling as the first Black woman on the nation's highest court.

The 51-year-old Jackson is the court's 116th justice, and she took the place of the justice she once worked for. Justice Stephen Breyer's retirement was effective at noon.

Moments later, joined by her family, Jackson recited the two oaths required of Supreme Court justices, one administered by Breyer and the other by Chief Justice John Roberts.

"With a full heart, I accept the solemn responsibility of supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States and administering justice without fear or favor, so help me God," Jackson said in a statement issued by the court. "I am truly grateful to be part of the promise of our great Nation. I extend my sincerest thanks to all of my new colleagues for their warm and gracious welcome."

Roberts welcomed Jackson "to the court and our common calling." The ceremony was streamed live on the court's website.

Jackson, a federal judge since 2013, is joining three other women — Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan and Amy Coney Barrett. It's the first time four women will serve together



In this image from video provided by the Supreme Court, retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Stephen Breyer administers the Judicial Oath to Ketanji Brown Jackson as her husband Patrick Jackson holds the Bible at the Supreme Court in Washington, Thursday, June 30, 2022.

Associated Press

on the nine-member court. Biden nominated Jackson in February, a month after Breyer, 83, announced he would retire at the end of the court's term, assuming his successor had been confirmed. Breyer's earlier-than-usual announcement and the condition he attached was a recognition of the Democrats' tenuous hold on the Senate in an era of hyper-partisanship, especially surrounding federal judgeships.

The Senate confirmed Jackson's nomination in early April, by a 53-47 mostly party-line vote that in-

cluded support from three Republicans.

Jackson had been in a sort of judicial limbo since, remaining a judge on the federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., but not hearing any cases. Biden elevated her to that court from the district judgeship to which she was appointed by President Barack Obama.

Glynda Carr, president of Higher Heights for America, an organization that advocates for the growth of Black women's political power, said the timing of Jackson's swearing-in was

bittersweet.

"Although we celebrate her today, one Black woman or a cohort of Black women can't save this democracy alone. We are a piece of it and we are doing our work, our part. She's going to forever reshape and shape that court. But she's just a piece of the work that needs to happen moving forward," Carr said.

Because of Jackson's appointment, Judith Browne Dianis, a Black lawyer in Washington, said she intends to end her protest against joining the Supreme Court Bar. She started it

when Justice Clarence Thomas was confirmed in 1991. She said that even the series of conservative rulings from the court over the past week cannot take away from the significance of Thursday's ceremony.

"This is a momentous occasion and it's still a beautiful moment," said Dianis, executive director of the civil rights group Advancement Project.

But, Dianis added, "she's joining the court at a time when conservatives are holding the line and trying to actually take us back, because they see the progress that's being made in our country. It's like the Civil War that never ended. That's the court that she's joining."

Jackson will be able to begin work immediately, but the court will have just finished the bulk of its work until the fall, apart from emergency appeals that occasionally arise. That will give her time to settle in and familiarize herself with the roughly two dozen cases the court already has agreed to hear starting in October as well as hundreds of appeals that will pile up over the summer.

She helps form the most diverse court in its 232-year history and is the first former public defender to be a justice. The court that Jackson is joining is the most conservative than it has been since the 1930s. □

Portrait fills last vacancy on Sept. 11 memorial photo wall

By JOSEPH FREDERICK

NEW YORK (AP) — A portrait filled the last vacancy on the photo wall at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum on Wednesday, concluding the almost 16-year-long project to memorialize the hundreds killed as a result of the terrorist attacks of 2001.

Antonio Dorsey Pratt's portrait, provided through Voices Center for Resilience, an organization started after 9/11 that is dedicated to remembering the victims, was hung on the wall. Pratt was an employee of Cantor

Fitzgerald Forte Food Service on the 101st floor of the north tower of the old World Trade Center.

"This is a chapter in the sense that we were able to provide the last missing photograph for the exhibit," said Mary Fetchet, director of Voices Center for Resilience.

Alice Greenwald, CEO of the memorial and museum, said Pratt's photo marked the completion "of a process that began almost 16 years ago when we began work on just even imagining what the 9/11 Memorial & Museum would be and what it would contain."

Pratt's photo is blurry because "in order to focus on his beautiful face, a lot of work had to be done to zero in and enlarge and enlarge to the point where it could be appropriate for the scale of the installation," Greenwald said.

The image is still recognizable despite all the enhancements, Greenwald said.

The memorial exhibition honors the 2,977 people killed on Sept. 11, 2001 by the hijacked planes that crashed in New York City, at the Pentagon and in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. □



9/11 Memorial & Museum President & CEO Alice Greenwald speaks at a portrait-hanging ceremony on Wednesday, June 29, 2022 in New York. 9/11 Memorial & Museum President & CEO Alice Greenwald speaks at a portrait-hanging ceremony on Wednesday, June 29, 2022 in New York.

Associated Press

Justice Department to investigate NYPD sex crimes unit

By **MICHAEL R. SISK, LARRY NEUMEISTER and JENNIFER PELTZ**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. Justice Department has launched a sweeping inquiry into the New York Police Department's famed sex crimes investigators following years of complaints about the way they treat crime victims.

The civil rights investigation, announced Thursday, will examine whether the NYPD's Special Victims Division engages in a pattern of gender-biased policing, officials said.

"Survivors of sexual assault should expect effective, trauma-informed and victim-centered investigations by police departments," said Kristen Clarke, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division. New York City's two U.S. attorneys joined her in announcing the inquiry.

The police unit inspired TV's "Law & Order: SVU," and the real-life version has tackled such major cases as the prosecution of former movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. But the division also has faced a decade of complaints about thin staffing and superficial investigations.

In a 2019 lawsuit, a woman alleged detectives shrugged off her report of being raped by someone she'd been involved with, logging it as a "dispute" instead of a sex crime. Another woman said in the suit that her account of being kidnapped and gang-raped was grossly mishandled for months before she was told the case was "too complex" to investigate.

After the lawsuit and a leadership shakeup, the NYPD promised change. But victims' advocates say it hasn't happened.



Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Kristen Clarke speaks at a news conference at the Department of Justice in Washington, Thursday, Aug. 5, 2021.

Associated Press

"We hope the Justice Department's investigation and our lawsuit will finally result in real change for victims and survivors of sexual assault in New York City," said the women's lawyer, Mariann Wang.

The NYPD said it welcomes the review and is committed to improving its investigations.

Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell said she believed any "constructive" review would "show that the NYPD has been evolving and improving in this area, but we will be transparent and open to criticism as well as ideas."

Mayor Eric Adams, a retired police captain who took office in January and appointed Sewell, said she immediately took steps

to make sure the unit was "professional."

"We were not sitting on our hands," the Democrat said. Breon Peace, the U.S. attorney in Brooklyn, said the NYPD has already taken steps to address concerns, but authorities want to ensure victims are treated fairly in the future.

Justice Department officials said they planned a comprehensive review of policies, procedures and training for the Special Victims Division's sex assault investigations — including how police interact with survivors and witnesses, collect evidence and complete investigations.

The officials also want to see what steps the police department has taken to fix deficiencies, including

the unit's staffing and its services for sexual assault survivors.

The Weinstein case spotlighted the sex crimes division, which helped build a prosecution that ended with a watershed conviction for the #MeToo movement. But along the way, prosecutors dropped one of the charges in 2018, after evidence surfaced that a detective had coached a witness and told an accuser to delete material from her cellphone.

A lawyer for the woman whose allegation was dropped from the case has faulted prosecutors for what happened. She said Thursday that she welcomed shining light on police practices, offering a mixed view of the police sex crimes unit.

"Our experience is that many viable sexual assault cases are tossed out by police at the earliest stages of investigation," said the attorney, Carrie Goldberg. "On the other hand, some of the most consequential sexual assault prosecu-

tions of recent history — for example, that of Harvey Weinstein — were driven by the tenacity of dedicated NYPD investigators."

After the 2019 lawsuit, the unit got a new leader, Judith Harrison, and shifted to what she called a "victim-centered" approach — but she soon moved to a different position.

Successor Michael King, appointed in 2020, was a veteran investigator and forensic nurse. King was removed from the job in February, amid complaints about his leadership and continued mishandling of cases.

Last October, a woman who identified herself as a rape victim told a City Council hearing that detectives failed to interview witnesses, collect security camera footage from the bar where she'd been before the attack, or test for date-rape drugs. She said they closed the case twice without telling her.

In another case, detailed in a 2020 article in The New York Times, a New York University student said a sex crimes detective openly doubted her allegation that a stranger had raped her in her apartment. The investigator talked her out of moving forward and shut down the case, she said.

The suspected rapist, identified through fingerprints on a condom wrapper found at the apartment, was later jailed on burglary charges — but ended up being released and assaulting three more women because the Special Victims Division never told prosecutors he was a rape suspect, the Times reported.

The unit has also been under scrutiny, including from the NYPD's internal affairs bureau, for allegedly mishandling rape kits and for investigators allegedly shortchanging the department on hours worked.

Damian Williams, the U.S. attorney in Manhattan, said sex crimes victims "deserve the same rigorous and unbiased investigations of their cases that the NYPD affords to other categories of crime." □



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New Zealand designates Proud Boys a terrorist organization

By NICK PERRY

Associated Press

WELLINGTON, New Zealand

(AP) — New Zealand's government has declared that American far-right groups the Proud Boys and The Base are terrorist organizations.

The two groups join 18 others including Islamic State that have been given an official terrorist designation, making it illegal in New Zealand to fund, recruit or participate in the groups, and obligating authorities to take action against them. The U.S. groups are not known to be active in New Zealand, although the South Pacific nation has become more attuned to threats from the far right after a white supremacist shot and killed 51 Muslim worshippers at two Christchurch mosques in 2019. The New Zealand massacre inspired other white supremacists around the world, including a white gunman who killed 10 Black people at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York. In the U.S., the State Department only lists foreign groups as terrorist entities.



New Zealand Police Minister Chris Hipkins during his press conference at Parliament, Wellington, New Zealand, Thursday, June 30, 2022.

But the Proud Boys were last year named a terrorist group in Canada, while The Base has previously been declared a terrorist group in Britain, Canada and Australia.

In a 29-page explanation of the Proud Boys designation published Thursday, New Zealand authorities said the group's involvement in the violent attack

on the U.S. Capitol building on Jan. 6, 2021 amounted to an act of terrorism.

The statement said that while several militia groups were involved, it was the Proud Boys who incited crowds, coordinated attacks on law enforcement officers and led other rioters to where they could break into the building.

The statement said there

are unlinked but ideologically affiliated chapters of the Proud Boys operating in Canada and Australia.

New Zealand authorities argued that before the Capitol attack, the Proud Boys had a history of using street rallies and social media to intimidate opponents and recruit young men through demonstrations of violence. It said the group had put

up various smoke screens to hide its extremism.

Earlier this month, the former leader of the Proud Boys, Henry "Enrique" Tarrio, and four others linked to the group were charged in the U.S. with seditious conspiracy for what federal prosecutors say was a coordinated attack on the Capitol.

The indictment alleges that the Proud Boys conspired to forcibly oppose the lawful transfer of presidential power. The five are scheduled to stand trial in August in Washington, D.C.'s federal court.

Asked by media Thursday in New Zealand if the Proud Boys weren't better known for protest actions rather than extreme violence, New Zealand Police Minister Chris Hipkins said: "Well, violent protests attempting to overthrow the government, clearly there is evidence of that."

In making its case against The Base, New Zealand authorities said a key goal of the group was to "train a cadre of extremists capable of accelerationist violence." □

Associated Press

Sudan doctors: 6 people killed in mass anti-coup rallies

By NOHA ELHENNAWY

CAIRO (AP) —

Sudanese security forces shot and killed six people during anti-coup protests Thursday, a medical group said as thousands marched to denounce the country's military rulers and demand an immediate transfer of power to civilians.

The Sudan's Doctors Committee said in a tweet that four people were fatally shot when police fired live ammunition at protesters in Omdurman, the twin city of Khartoum, the Sudanese capital.

Across the Nile River in Khartoum, a fifth person died after being shot in the head and a child died after being shot in the chest, according the group, which tracks casualties during protests. The identity of all six was not immediately known.

Also in Khartoum, police fired tear gas at thousands

of demonstrators trying to reach the Republican Palace, the military's seat of power in the heart of the city. Videos showing thousands waving Sudanese flags and running under clouds of tear gas were posted on social media.

Other videos show demonstrators raising banners reading "No Negotiations! No Partnership" reiterating their opposition to any power-sharing deal with the military rulers.

Sudan's leading pro-democracy groups Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change and the Resistance Committees had called for nationwide protest on Thursday to reiterate their demands for a reversal of the Oct. 25 military coup. The takeover upended the East African country's short-lived transition to democracy following the 2019 ouster of long-time autocratic ruler Omar

al-Bashir.

Thursday's protests also fell on the third anniversary of a 2019 mass rally that forced the generals to sit down at the negotiating table with pro-democracy groups and eventually sign a power-sharing agreement that was expected to govern Sudan during a transitional period, until general elections were to be held. The coup last October scuttled this arrangement.

Meanwhile, the London-based internet advocacy group, NetBlocks, said internet access was disrupted across many mobile and fixed-line internet providers in Sudan on Thursday, including state operator Sudantel, leaving national connectivity at only 17% of its ordinary level.

Cuts to internet services have been routinely recorded ahead of most anti-coup protests.

"NetBlocks recommends



Sudanese women chant slogans protesting security forces' use of violence against anti-coup protesters in the city of Omdurman, 18 miles (30 km) northwest of Sudan's capital Khartoum on Saturday, June 25, 2022.

Associated Press

against the use of network disruptions and social media restrictions to counter protests, given their disproportionate impact to fundamental rights including freedom of expression and freedom of assembly," said the London-based group. The October coup trig-

gered near-weekly street demonstrations, which authorities have met with a deadly crackdown that has so far killed 109 people, including Thursday's casualties.

Among those killed were 18 children, according to the Doctors Committee. □

Peru home build vexed by 'the neighbors' -- Inca-era mummies

By **FRANLIN BRICEÑO**

LIMA, Peru (AP) — Hipólito Tica had saved for decades to finally build himself a proper house in a working class neighborhood of Lima. His problem was what to do about "the neighbors" — as he called the centuries-old mummies buried below.

The mechanic had known they were there since the day in 1996 when he tried to dig a latrine on the lot, which is a few yards (meters) from the El Sauce archaeological site on the eastern edge of the Peruvian capital.

Taking a break from hefting bricks, Tica told The Associated Press that he had been working to loosen the earth with a metal rod when the ground suddenly began to collapse.

"I got out of there fast as a spider," he said.

Tica found a flashlight and went to check out the hole that had opened at his feet, some 5 meters (16 feet) deep and 3 meters (10 feet) wide.

"I saw some bundles — the light was bright enough; they were funerary bundles," he said.

He wasn't sure what to do, who to tell.



Archaeologists excavate ancient bones and vessels from a previous Inca culture that were discovered by city workers digging a natural gas line in the Brena neighborhood of Lima, Peru, Feb. 11, 2020.

Associated Press

Like roughly a half million other people around the edges of Lima, he had just moved in, building a rudimentary adobe structure on the unoccupied lot without owning a title. So drawing the attention of authorities to an archaeological find could cost him a home.

In spite of that, he said he broached word of the discovery to some archaeolo-

gists who were excavating Incan ceramics from nearby streets where the city was installing water lines. He said they didn't pay much attention. He didn't press the issue.

So he decided to just co-exist with "the neighbors." He covered the hole with an old door, a carpet he pulled out of an old car and a layer of dirt.

"Nobody noticed the hole,"

he said.

As the years passed, Tico and his neighbors gradually won rights to the property in their new neighborhood. He planned to build a house of brick and cement and along with neighbors applied for water and sewage service — which required approval from the Secretary of Culture and a local museum to ensure to ensure that they would

not harm archaeological remains.

There Tica, who had little formal schooling, began to learn about the Incas and other early Peruvian civilizations.

Building the house correctly would mean laying a foundation and filling in the hole where the bodies were buried.

"I was worried," he said. Friends advised him: "Just cover it, fill it with cement and you're ready."

But "I had a nagging worry that people in the future wouldn't know anything about this area. Part of history is here," he said.

So he looked up an archaeologist, Julio Abanto of the Ruricancho Cultural Institute, who was doing research in the area, and told him, "I have a burial and I want you to see it."

Abanto and his team got government permission for an emergency dig.

The archaeologist lowered himself into the hole with ropes and found three bundles, each of which contained more than one individual — it's not yet clear how many — belonging to a culture within the Inca empire more than 500 years ago. □

Biden: Court ruling on Roe 'destabilizing,' U.S. still leading



President Joe Biden speaks during a news conference on the final day of the NATO summit in Madrid, Thursday, June 30, 2022.

Associated Press

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE and ZEKE MILLER**

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — President Joe Biden said Thursday that the Supreme Court's decision ending a constitutional right to abortion is "destabilizing," but he

maintained the ruling does not affect U.S. standing on the world stage as he took credit for modernizing the transatlantic alliance to adapt to new threats from Russia and China.

Biden was speaking to reporters at the conclusion

of a five-day foreign trip to huddle with NATO allies in Madrid and the leaders of the Group of Seven advanced democratic economies in the Bavarian Alps, which came as the nation was still grappling with the fallout from Friday's Supreme Court decision.

"America is better positioned to lead the world than we ever have been," Biden said. "But one thing that has been destabilizing is the outrageous behavior of the Supreme Court of United States in overruling not only Roe v. Wade, but essentially challenging the right to privacy."

He added: "I could understand why the American people are frustrated because of what the Supreme Court did."

Biden said he would support changing the Senate

filibuster rules, which require 60 votes to pass most legislation, to allow bringing a bill extending nationwide abortion protections to pass by simple majority, although Democrats don't have sufficient votes in the Senate for that.

The three-day NATO summit included the Biden administration announcing plans to permanently bolster the U.S. military presence in Europe, an agreement between Turkey, Finland and Sweden to pave the way for the accession of Nordic nations into NATO, and the alliance updating its strategic concept reflect that China's "coercive policies" are a challenge the Western bloc's interests.

"I think we can all agree that this has been a historic NATO Summit," Biden said. He noted the last time NATO

updated what is essentially its mission statement was 12 years ago, when Russia was characterized as a partner, and the document didn't even mention China. The new document hammered out at the summit changes that.

"The world has changed, changed a great deal since then," Biden said. "This summit was about strengthening our alliances, meeting the challenges of our world as it is a day, and the threats we're going to face in the future," Biden said.

Biden also highlighted announcements at the G-7 meeting, including more economic and military assistance to Ukraine as it aims to beat back Russia's four-month invasion, and announcements on tougher sanctions meant to punish Moscow. □

Bilateral meeting between minister Ursell Arends and Kingdom minister of Infrastructure and Water Management, Mark Harbers

On the second day of Ocean Conference 2022, minister of Transportation, Integrity, Nature and Elderly Affairs had a meeting with Kingdom minister of Infrastructure and Water Management, Mark Harbers from the Netherlands, during which gave an update on various projects and policies that the minister is implementing in Aruba.

Furthermore, the ministers discussed the three points brought forward by Aruba during an interactive dialogue, which was focused on promoting and strengthening a sustainable economy based on the ocean. Particularly for Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), adaptability and transition towards sustainability is of the utmost importance. They had a conversation about exploring opportunities for collaboration y also to share best practices and expertise with each other.

Finally, they discussed the participation of Aruba – as



a country that is part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands – in the Water Conference 2023, organized by the Netherlands together with Tajikistan. This will take place next year in New York.

According to a government press release, it was a fruitful day during which they elaborated on various ways for Aruba to start, amplify and accelerate action to reduce pressure on our ocean, while adhering to the World Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of

the United Nations.

Minister Arends' speech at United Nations Ocean Conference 2022

As minister of Nature, Ursell Arends gave a speech during the meeting "Interactive Dialogue 5; Promoting and strengthening sustainable ocean-based economies, in particular for Small Island Developing States and least developed countries".

"Aruba, as a Small Island Developing State is con-



nected via and is dependent upon our ocean. All activity, both on the water and on land has an impact directly and indirectly on the marine health of the water that is around us. A big portion of our economy is dependent on the health of our ocean, its water and beaches which are our touristic product. Through the ocean we also generate our drinking water through the process of desalination. For us, there is an enormous necessity to ensure that we create

and maintain a sustainable 'Blue Economy'.

To finalize, Arends said: "We are here to learn from each other, to better our expertise and to fortify our ties with international partners. We are glad to be able to share our story, how we are supporting the Kingdom of the Netherlands in its efforts to promote a holistic, collaborative strategy with a focus on 'source-to-sea approach' to identify and regulate the contaminants which reach our ocean." □

Aruba back to normal after tropical wave

After the latest meeting with Crisis Team, prime minister Evelyn Wever-Croes gave a press conference at the offices of the Disaster Management Bureau, during which she announced that from noon yesterday all measures taken for the bad weather were eliminated, and Aruba is back to normal.

"The words that Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire are safe are words that I wanted to hear from the beginning, when we saw these three islands were under threat of being caught in the storm", the prime minister said.

From yesterday noon, all measures were eliminated. Commercial sector was up and running and back to normal. The public sector was doing the work to set the systems back up so that today they could provide service without interruption.



Regarding schools, initially was announced that schools would be closed on Thursday and Friday. This is no longer the case, seeing as there is no need to keep schools closed on Friday as well. Crisis team had contact with school management and most also indicated that they wanted to start school today, considering they have a lot of work pending.

"I thank every citizen in our country, which even though we were in difficult moments, private sector had to close their business and citizens had to stay inside, kids couldn't go to school, and each citizen with a civic behavior followed the rules that were give. And we are safe so that today we are back up and continue recuperation", Wever-Croes said. □

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Travellers' Choice 2020

Aruba reports on the implementation of the SDGs together with the other countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands



ORANJESTAD - To further encourage countries to implement the SDGs, the United Nations has set up the SDG Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, enabling countries to report on the implementation of the SDGs.

On July 14, 2022, all the countries within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, will present the progress made in implementing the SDGs to the United Nations and will also highlight some of the challenges faced. The implementation of the SDGs in Aruba has been captured in the Aruba SDG Report that will be presented to the UN as part of

the report of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The SDG Aruba commission, which was instituted to provide strategic direction and to coordinate the implementation of the SDGs organized different sessions to engage the community in order to identify good practices by local organizations in implementing the SDGs and was in charge of coordinating the inputs for and writing the Aruba report.

The Kingdom report, which includes the Aruba report can be accessed online on the hlpf.un.org

website under Netherlands (<https://hlpf.un.org/countries/netherlands/voluntary-national-review-2022>)

Background:

In September 2015 all member states of the United Nations (UN) unanimously adopted the World's most ambitious and comprehensive program to help create a more sustainable world for all and setting 17 specific goals, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be reached by 2030. Therefore, Aruba is also on board with the goal achievement

efforts.

This global TO DO list sets an agenda where development is not only looked at from an economic perspective, but also includes social and environmental aspects. Effectively implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) framework and its very broad Agenda by 2030 and creating a more sustainable Aruba requires a more engaged and action-oriented community.

United and working together, ensures that we achieve more. ☐



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Alliance of public and private sectors for crime prevention and safety

ORANJESTAD - The Minister of Justice and Social Affairs, Mr. Rocco Tjon, attended the first ASIS Dutch Caribbean Conference on Resilience, Cyber, and Security.

ASIS is the American Society for Industrial Security, a global community of professionals in the field of security. Its task is to protect human assets, properties, information, and more.

Alliances of these workshops are beneficial but have risks because the police corps and private security organizations work independently and have other objectives. However, according to recent studies, the benefits of having an alliance overweight the risks. That means that these alliances can improve security.

When talking about cybercrimes, we refer to one of the most diverse kinds of crime, especially transnational crimes. These are very complex and are challenging for the justice apparatus. Based on the

evolutionary trajectory of cybercrimes, the justice apparatus is sharing information and knowledge with their counterparts abroad to develop a plan based on the acquired intelligence. A while ago, the Minister met with the board of the ASIS Dutch Caribbean Chapter 304, where they exchanged ideas to create better alliances to increase security and protection but also prevent cybercrimes. Often, the expertise to counterattack cybercrimes comes from other sectors. The police department does not always have the knowledge or solution to fight against these on its own. That is why alliances with other organizations provide the opportunity for an INTERPOL for example, to benefit from the cyber expertise and technology available in the public, private, and academic sectors.

Research shows that successful alliances are based on active and strong leaders and facilitators, and continuous communication, structural meetings,



and training. At the same time, the main obstacles to efficient collaboration are the lack of information exchange, distrust, and misinformation. The judicial apparatus needs to work closely with private security organizations and share knowledge with others on their professional capacities. It needs to provide training and assign who is in the best position to address various issues and an inventory of the abilities.

Minister Tjon believes in the alliance between the police department and the

prove with these alliances.

"To create and keep a secure community is not only the responsibility of the police department; it requires broad alliances with the community, private sector, and other Government departments to create laws and efficient and effective practices based on evidence". The Minister remarked. □

private security organizations due to other challenges within the judicial apparatus, such as finance and personnel, which can im-



History of fishing in Aruba

ORANJESTAD — Fishing has been a family tradition for ages in Aruba. Our ancestors used to fish for a living. Even though nowadays you don't see them often we still have some passionate fishermen on the island that go out every day in search for fish to feed their families and serve our local market. One of these fisherman is Gregory Wernet.

The so-called Continental Bank between Aruba and the opposite coast reaches a depth of about 650 feet. The sea is very rich in fish here. Since the time of the indigenous native people fish and other sea creatures such as turtles, octopus squids, conch and many type of crustaceans have formed a means of subsistence for the native Aruban inhabitants. Especially along the west coast of the island where the fishing grounds are settlements of fishermen. Until the arrival of the oil -industry Aruban

fishermen could supply Aruba's wants.

As a source of income, however, fishing did not amount too much. In the beginning of the 1900's approximately 160 people earn their living in this branch of this industry. Rancho, which stands for a shed, nowadays east Oranjestad, was the head quarter and remains the fishermen's settlement. Savaneta, Noord, Santa Cruz all had their fishermen's villages. At a rough estimate there were about a hundred small fishing boats during that time.

The Arubans were mainly engaged in coastal fishing, using rowing-boats or small sailing-boats, and lines or dragnets and canisters in shallow water. When fishing with deep-sea lines just over the bottom of the sea the boat is kept in place by means of a piece of rock serving as an anchor. The two most important species of fish by far caught in this manner are the pargo or



red snappers and a variety of groupers like the mero, jeanpao and the wowo di boyo.

Cruising off the coast the Aruban fisherman patiently waits for a fish willing to snap at the bait on the drag-line, in nets and traps. Veritable giants are sometimes caught. Barracudas weigh from 9 to 44 pounds and measure from

3 to almost 7 feet. The kingfish has a weight from 22 to 44 pounds; the moclat may tip the scales at 155, whilst garfish, having a length of nine feet, weigh over 132 pounds.

Most fish caught is used for their own consumption, to feed their families and some are being sold in the market to local restaurants.

Fisherman Gregory Wernet

Gregory Wernet is a well-known fisherman from Santa Cruz. His father taught him fishing when he was a small child. Gregory has two sons, Jordan and Jordanny, which he taught fishing too, when they were only 3 years old and he takes them fishing with him. Fishing has been a family tradition for quite a long time and even his grandson Willvion of 7 years old is following his grandfather steps. This is the sixth generation of fishermen in their family.

They go deep sea fishing. There they catch red snapper, grouper and amberjack. They usually fish for 15 hours a day, but now due to the covid-19 measurements they go fishing from 5 in the morning until 8 o'clock at night or even sometimes from 8 at night till 5 in the morning. The day before they prepare all their fishing tools such as the Lines, lures, spears, and load their boat with fishing reels, batteries, fill the gasoline tank, lights and some food and beverages. For bait he uses sardines, squid and the small fish known



in Aruba as piskechi. They have two boats they use for fishing. 'Virgen del Valle' which is parked at the pier by the Seaport and 'Padrot' which they have at home.

The fish they catch they take home to their families and they also sell it to their clients. Gregory is proud to be a fisherman. It is a honest and humble job but with it he is able to feed his family even during hard times. It is a very dangerous job and you have to spend many hours on the sea, waiting patiently and risking your life while fighting a big fish and big waves but the adrenaline it brings with it but also just sitting there listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the marvelous view that nature has to offer is all worth it. □

Source: Etnia Nativa



Today marks 159 years since the Netherlands abolished slavery in colonies of Surinam and Netherlands Antilles

Aruba has its own slavery history

Aruban minister of Culture, **Xiomara Maduro** informs that today, 1st of July marks 159 years since the Netherlands gave the slaves in Suriname, Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius and Saba their freedom. The history of slavery in Aruba is not well known, and for this reason, as part of the formation of our own identity, it is important for the people of Aruba to find out more about the less pretty aspect of the history of our country and of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Aruba has its own slavery history

On Aruba there were also slaves, although in a smaller quantity than the other islands in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, where there business was being made in the sale of slaves, and the big plantations where the slaves labored. According to investigations, slaves in Aruba worked within homes, at the store of their owners, as caretak-

ers for animals or in farms. In 1863 during the slave emancipation, around 500 slaves managed to obtain their freedom in Aruba. Even though this is a limited quantity, it is part of the history of slavery in Aruba.

Various investigations on slavery in Aruba

There have been various experts who investigated slavery in Aruba and our colonial history, which resulted in documents, books and documentaries. The minister of Culture invites the people to visit the National Archive of Aruba, Sala Arubiana of the National Library of Aruba, and the National Archeological Museum of Aruba to find out more about the history of slavery on the island. At the National Archive of Aruba, for example, there are various stories of slaves, and there is a registry in which there are last names which are descendants of slaves. A well-known story is that of Virginia Dementricia Gaai, who was a rebellious

slave and from whom various families in Aruba are descended. In the Netherlands there is a street, in Rotterdam, dedicated to her name, Virginia Gaai-pad.

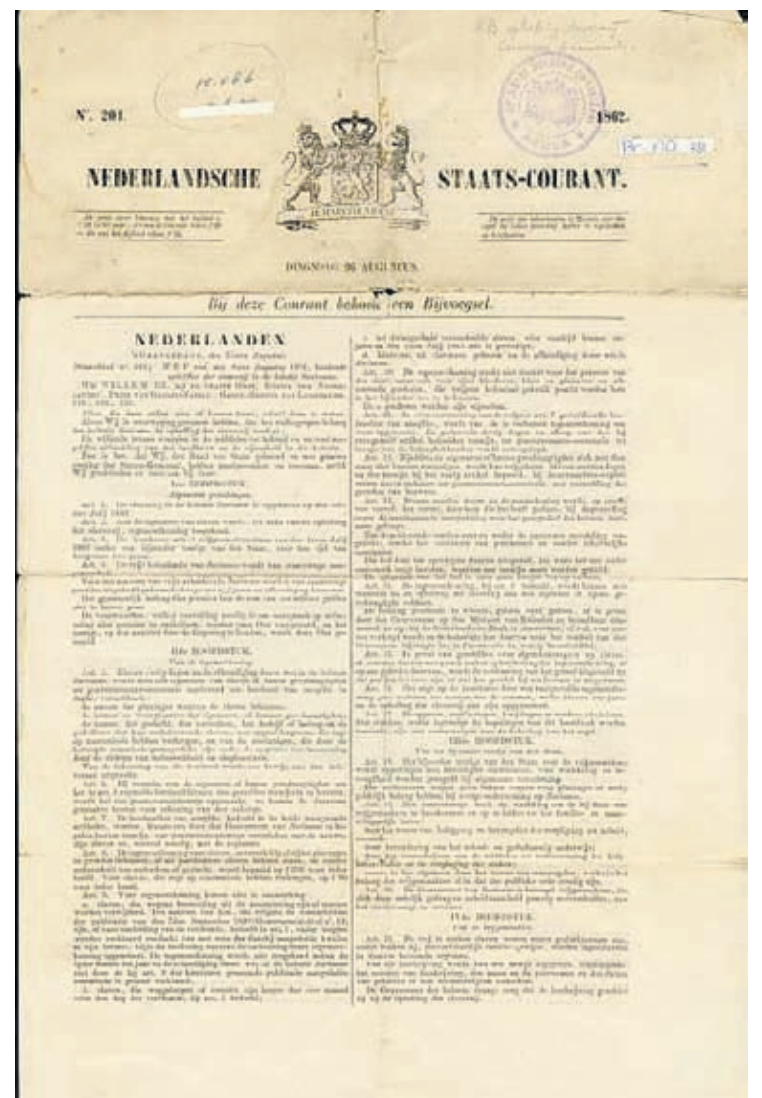
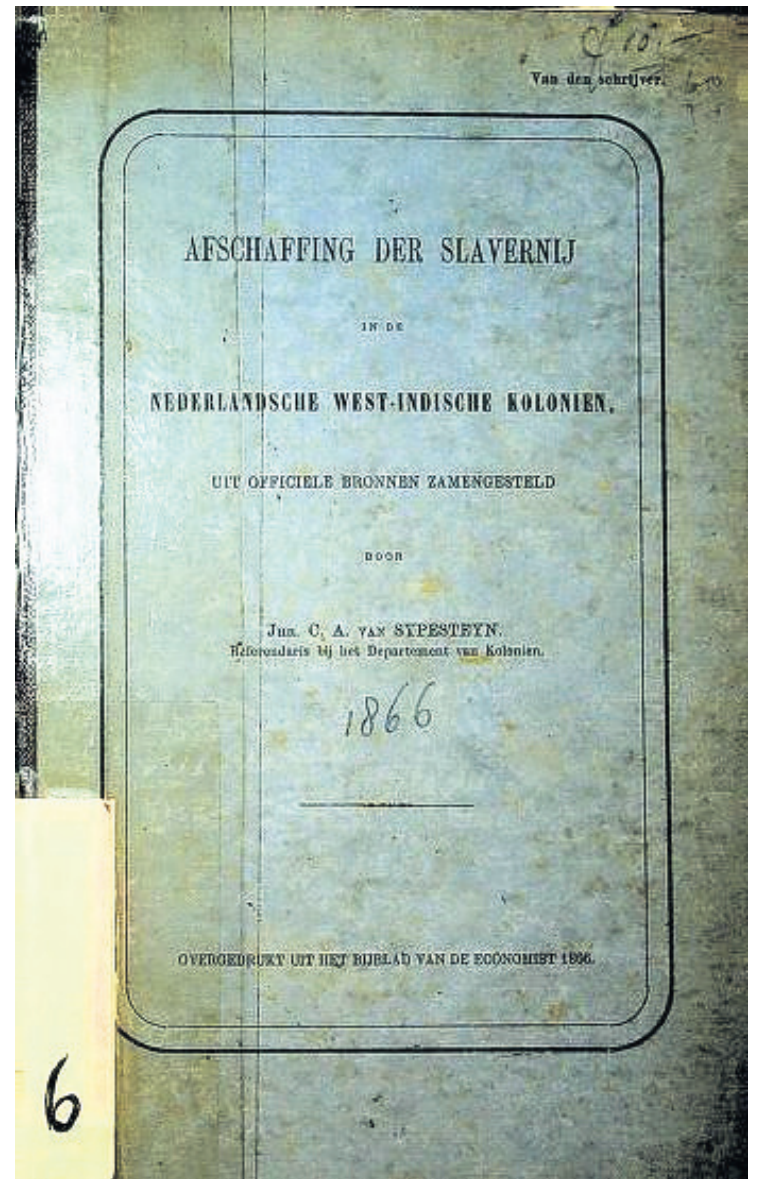
History of slavery is a current theme in the Kingdom

In July 2020, minister of Internal Affairs and Kingdom Affairs of the Netherlands formed a commission with various professionals in the Kingdom and Suriname to organize a social dialogue on the subject of the slavery past and its impact on the present. This dialogue is directed on connection, on recognition, and for slavery to receive its place in the shared history of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The commission produced the report "Ketenen uit het Verleden" (Chains from the Past) in which they formulated some recommendations for the Dutch state, among others, to recognize and offer apologies for the slavery past in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. This apology would help heal historical wounds and also helps to work together towards a shared future. The intention is not to blame anyone, but for the Dutch state to recognize the pain caused by slavery, and to assume responsibility in the relationship with each other in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Importance of knowing our history

As Arubans it is very important for us to know our past, since this knowledge is necessary for us to understand the present and helps us determine where we want to go in the future, as people and as country. Slavery also is a part of our past and it is for this reason important for us to know the stories, so we can avoid repeating them in our present and future. In the coming period, the ministry of Culture will dedicate attention and provide information on this part of our country's history.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 40 Nary a soul
- 1 Plotters' group
- 6 Some turns
- 11 Ease up
- 12 Parts of hearts
- 13 In the raw
- 14 Subway support
- 15 Flying star
- 16 Small beards
- 18 Failure
- 19 Shade source
- 20 Like the desert
- 21 Pharaoh symbols
- 23 Losing plans
- 25 Bonanza stuff
- 27 Moody music
- 28 Public outcry
- 30 Diamond workers
- 33 Haddock's home
- 34 Mattress attachment
- 36 Heady brew
- 37 Smallest Great Lake
- 39 Caffeine source
- DOWN**
- 1 Ottawa's nation
- 2 Old counter
- 3 Steak sides
- 4 Put away
- 5 Pigeon's perch
- 6 Wyoming city
- 7 Coup d'—
- 8 Southern side
- 9 Floor workers
- 10 Pert
- 17 Dated
- 22 — Lanka
- 24 Ostrich
- 26 Menu choices
- 28 Lady of Spain
- 29 TV's "Cobra —"
- 31 Make happy
- 32 On the sofa
- 33 Boom type
- 35 Over-charge
- 38 Writer Rice
- 42 Arthur of TV

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Yesterday's answer

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7-1

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-1 CRYPTOQUOTE

OGZGEGGZB GPF ZQOF GZE

ITHQMF QM'B ZTM XJBM G

BMEPPTMAIF — XJBMQZ MPJEFGL

(DGIIA OGZGEG EGA MT TJP

ZFQVDUTPB MT MDF ZTPMD!)

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THERE ARE NO PASSENGERS ON SPACESHIP EARTH. WE ARE ALL CREW. — MARSHALL MCLUHAN

Big cats in urban jungle: LA mountain lions, Mumbai leopards



A leopard is seen walking across a ridge in Aarey colony near Sanjay Gandhi National Park overlooking Mumbai city, India, May, 12, 2018.

Associated Press

Associated Press

Los Angeles and Mumbai, India, share many superlatives as pinnacles of cinema, fashion, and traffic congestion. But another similarity lurks in the shadows, most often seen at night walking silently on four paws.

These metropolises are the world's only megacities of 10 million-plus where large felines — mountain lions in one, leopards in the other — thrive by breeding, hunting and maintaining territory within urban boundaries. Long-term studies in both cities have examined how the big cats prowl through their urban jungles, and how people can best live alongside them — lessons that may be applicable to more places in coming decades.

"In the future, there's going to be more cities like this, as urban areas further encroach on natural habitats," said biologist Audra Huffmeyer, who studies mountain lions at the University of California, Los Angeles. "If we want to keep these large carnivores around on the planet, we

have to learn to live with them."

FREEWAYS AND FRAGMENTED HABITAT

Twenty years ago, scientists in Los Angeles placed a tracking collar on their first cat, a large male mountain lion dubbed P1, that defended a wide swath of the Santa Monica Mountains, a coastal range that lies within and adjacent to the city.

"P1 was as big as they get in southern California, about 150 pounds," said Seth Riley, a National Park Service ecologist who was part of the effort. "These dominant males are the ones that breed — they won't tolerate other adult males in their territory." With GPS tracking and camera traps, the scientists followed the rise and fall of P1's dynasty for seven years, through multiple mates and litters of kittens. "2009 was the last time we knew anything about P1," said Riley. "There must have been a fight. We found his collar, blood on a rock. And never saw him again. He was reasonably old."

Since then, Riley has

helped collar around 100 more mountain lions in Los Angeles, building a vast database of lion behavior that's contributed to understanding how much territory the cats need, what they eat (mostly deer), how often they cross paths with people and what may imperil their future.

As with medieval European kings, the biggest threat turned out to be inbreeding. Living in small territories separated by highways has caused some males to mate with daughters and granddaughters, who weren't able to naturally disperse farther away. That's led to genetic problems such as fertility issues and kinked tails.

"Based on genetic analysis, we know that P1 mated with P6, his daughter — that was the first case we documented of this very close inbreeding," said Riley. □

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Sonequa Martin-Green, Kate Mulgrew share 'Star Trek' stories

By HILARY FOX
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — After light years in space, actors Sonequa Martin-Green and Kate Mulgrew are meeting up on Earth to compare "Star Trek" stories.

Martin-Green, as Michael Burnham, is at the helm of "Star Trek: Discovery" which is headed for a fifth season. While Mulgrew was the first woman to lead a series on '90s "Star Trek: Voyager" and has returned to her character, Kathryn Janeway, albeit as a hologram, in the new animated series "Star Trek: Prodigy." Both shows are on Paramount+. In a joint interview, both captains talk about inspiring women and why hair styles can be important in deep space. Responses have been edited for brevity and clarity.

AP: Is there a support group or WhatsApp group for "Star Trek" captains?

MARTIN-GREEN: I should start one because I'm going to get (Mulgrew's) number for sure. We've seen each other a couple of times here lately doing press and everything. And I will be calling her up.

MULGREW: I look at Sonequa and I can see very clearly why she would be a very compelling captain. I don't think I need to support that. That simply is. But do you mean do we talk about what it is to be female captains?

MARTIN-GREEN: We've started.

MULGREW: We have and, of course, we go to the woman place. We go to the fact that we're raising small children while we're working hard. And women like to share that conflict. We're torn. You have two children for whom you would easily die. And then you have this career about which you are in expressively passionate. So it's a tough one to reconcile.

AP: Do you think your captains would get on?

MULGREW: We would get on because (Burnham's) real, she's vulnerable and she's honest. No holds barred. We would get on. It's artifice I can't stand.



Kate Mulgrew, left, and Sonequa Martin-Green pose for photographers upon arrival at the UK launch of the streaming site Paramount +, in London, Monday, June 20, 2022.

Associated Press

And Janeway couldn't stand it either. Baloney.

AP: Sonequa, your catchphrase is "Let's fly." Are you happy with that?

MARTIN-GREEN: Oh, I'm so happy with that. It's poetic.

MULGREW: That's wonderful. Oh, I'm envious.

AP: How do fans respond to you? These characters inspire a lot of women, especially to go into STEM subjects.

MULGREW: I've had probably the single greatest response from my fan base than any other actress because it I was the

first female captain, those women in STEM — a lot of them changed their minds, reformed, reshaped their opinions and their goals as a result of Captain Janeway. And because I saw it directly, I was deeply and directly affected by it. And over the years it's done nothing but evolve. Very, very few actresses have that. I've had it for over 25 years. It's extraordinary to me.

AP: And now you've got a younger generation as well, with "Star Trek: Prodigy?"

MULGREW: Somebody sent me an image of my granddaughter watching me on "Prodigy," and here was her face (wide-eyed). And I thought, she has no idea it's me.

AP: Sonequa, you are a woman of color running her own ship — how do people react?

MARTIN-GREEN: The response that I've gotten has been overwhelmingly, overwhelmingly uplifting. There were bits here and there that I was not surprised by. But the stories that I have heard, the

heart-to-heart exchanges that I've had with people already, it's mind blowing. "I decided to go into STEM because of you." Or even if somebody just decides to speak up for themselves in one exchange — if it's positive, then how grateful am I to be a part of it?

MULGREW: Because these are not conventional aspirations. These are women who are not aspiring to be beautiful, sexy, attractive to men. These are not Kardashian women. These are women who are trying to inspire people to understand things like the prime directive. Like hope. Like science. Everything that's elevated, noble and rich.

MARTIN-GREEN: Sacrificing for the future...

MULGREW: ...of the species. It's pretty, pretty evolved. It's very, very elevated.

AP: I did watch a video that kept track of your many hairstyles.

MULGREW: Outrageous. Lost in space in the Delta quadrant, 75,000 light years from home, a complement of 165 crew. And all she can do is change her hairdo every ten days. Ridiculous. They finally let it be.

AP: Michael's braids got massive positive response.

MARTIN-GREEN: It meant a lot, because from the very beginning, I was adamant about having natural hair, because that's a socio-political statement in itself. And then going to the braids. I love that Afrocentric expression and I love being able to see it in that world and in that story. I think it has an impact because, yet again, I want to contribute to that kind of progression and inclusivity, because we no longer are bound by the European standard of beauty. You get to be who you authentically are and be accepted.

MULGREW: Authentic. That's the key.

MARTIN-GREEN: And I love what you said about us not catering to the male gaze. **MULGREW:** Well, that's what "Star Trek" is. If the captain of "Star Trek" is going... (mimes doing hair in a mirror) It's absurd. □

AP source: USC, UCLA in process of joining Big Ten

By RALPH D. RUSSO and
ERIC OLSON

AP College Sports Writers

UCLA and Southern California are planning to leave the Pac-12 for the Big Ten Conference in a surprising move that could lead to another major realignment of college sports.

A person who has been briefed on the discussions between USC, UCLA and the Big Ten said the schools have taken steps to request an invitation to join the conference. The person spoke to The Associated Press on Thursday on condition of anonymity because the schools' talks with the Big Ten have not been made public.

The move would come as soon as 2024, after the Pac-12's current media rights contracts with Fox and ESPN expire, and increase the size of the Big Ten to 16 schools.

The decision by the Los Angeles schools — two of the NCAA's most decorated athletic programs — comes almost a year after Oklahoma and Texas formally accepted invitations to join the Southeastern Conference in July 2025.

The Big Ten would become the first conference to



UCLA guard Jaime Jaquez Jr., right, tries to get by Southern California forward Isaiah Mobley during the second half of an NCAA college basketball game on March 5, 2022, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific, build on previous expansion into the nation's largest media markets and help the league keep pace with the SEC as one of the most powerful entities in college sports.

Big Ten leadership, including the council of presidents and chancellors, would still have to sign off on extending an invitation to the two schools.

The Big Ten has expanded twice in recent years, with Nebraska joining in 2011 and Maryland and Rutgers in 2014.

USC and UCLA fit the Big Ten's academic profile. Both schools are among the 65 members of the Association of American Universities, which is made up of top research universities. All Big Ten schools except Nebraska are members.

The move to the Big Ten would greatly enhance USC and UCLA's revenues. The Pac-12 distributed only \$19.8 million per school in fiscal year 2021, by far the least among Power 5 conferences. The Big Ten's per-school distribution was \$46.1 million, second only to the SEC's \$54.6 million. The Pac-12 has had difficulty getting its conference television network

untracked while the Big Ten Network is the most established of the conference networks.

USC and UCLA would be taking a step up in football, both in visibility and competition.

"Pac-12 After Dark" televised games that kick off in the middle to late evenings in most of the country have made it difficult for the conference to get exposure. The Pac-12 has had teams in the College Football Playoff just twice — Oregon (2014 season) and Washington (2016).

Losing flagship schools like USC and UCLA would be a major blow to the Pac-12, which has had a long and amicable relationship with the Big Ten best exemplified by its Rose Bowl partnership. The Big Ten, Pac-12 and Atlantic Coast Conference last August formed an alliance in the wake of Oklahoma and Texas joining the SEC. The conferences said the 41 members would take a collaborative approach to charting the future of athletics. The three conferences set up scheduling arrangements in some sports and have pooled resources to promote athlete welfare. □

AP source: Kevin Durant asks for trade from Brooklyn Nets

By TIM REYNOLDS
AP Basketball Writer

Kevin Durant may be taking his quest for more titles elsewhere.

Durant has requested a trade from the Brooklyn Nets, according to a person with direct knowledge of the decision that undoubtedly will have teams scrambling to put together enormous offers for the perennial All-Star.

The Nets have been working with Durant to find a trade partner, and he has multiple teams on his preferred list, according to the person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Thursday because neither the player nor Brooklyn revealed any details publicly.

ESPN first reported Durant's trade request, citing Phoe-

nix and Miami as two of his preferred destinations. The bombshell came just hours before the NBA's free-agent period for this summer was set to begin.

Durant has played 14 seasons, not including one year when he sat out while recovering from a torn Achilles. He has averaged 27.2 points in his career — over that span, only LeBron James, at 27.3 points per game, has averaged more.

And even at his age — Durant will turn 34 on Sept. 29, around the time training camps open this fall — he is still one of the best players in the game, his 6-foot-11-frame making his jump shot almost unstoppable by any defender.

Durant is a 12-time All-Star, four-time scoring cham-

pion, three-time Olympic gold medalist and two-time NBA champion — those rings coming with Golden State, the team he was with before joining Brooklyn. He has four years and nearly \$200 million remaining on his contract, which means that it may take a haul of players, draft picks or possibly both for a team to acquire him.

Durant spent three seasons with Brooklyn, not playing in the first of those years while he recovered from the Achilles injury. He averaged 29.9 points in 55 games last season, after leading the U.S. to Olympic gold at the Tokyo Games last summer. Unless he changes his mind and stays, his departure will be a huge blow to the Nets. At this time last year, the Nets were banking on



Brooklyn Nets' Kevin Durant reacts during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Indiana Pacers, Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022, in Indianapolis.

Associated Press

contending for a championship with a core led by Durant, James Harden and Kyrie Irving.

That plan didn't come close to reality. Irving missed much of the year because of his refusal to be vacci-

nated against COVID-19; he was ineligible to play in home games for the majority of the season. Harden wound up getting traded to Philadelphia for Ben Simmons, who didn't play at all last season. □

Most American men reach Wimbledon's 3rd round since 1995

WIMBLEDON, England (AP)

— Brandon Nakashima's victory over 2021 Wimbledon semifinalist Denis Shapovalov at Court 12 on Thursday at the All England Club? Martin Blackman was there.

That came after Taylor Fritz used a full-on, headfirst dive to reach an unreachable shot on the way to eliminating Alastair Gray on the same patch of grass. Blackman was present for that one, too, just as he was for Jenson Brooksby's win at Court 17.

All in all, it's been quite a productive — and rare — start to Wimbledon for Nakashima, Fritz, Brooksby and other American men: There will be eight of them in the third round, accounting for a quarter of the 32



Taylor Fritz of the U.S. returns to Britain's Alastair Gray in a second round men's single match on day four of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London, Thursday, June 30, 2022.

Associated Press

players left in the field, the most for the country at the grass-court Grand Slam tournament since 1995. It's also the most at any major since the 1996 U.S. Open.

And so, in some ways, it's been quite a start for the

U.S. Tennis Association and Blackman, the general manager of USTA Player Development.

"It was fun. It was really fun. I was bouncing around," Blackman said during an evening rain delay Thurs-

day, before heading back out to watch 18-year-old American Coco Gauff beat Mihaela Buzarnescu 6-2, 6-3 on Centre Court.

Gauff, the French Open runner-up, became the fourth U.S. woman in the third round, joining No. 8 seed Jessica Pegula, No. 20 Amanda Anisimova and Alison Riske-Amritraj. Gauff faces Anisimova next.

"We're moving in the right direction. Obviously the goal isn't the third round. The goal is much farther than that," Blackman said.

"But when you get numbers like this, it's an indicator of a process that's working. So I think that's what's so encouraging. All the guys that are in the third round want to go much farther; I don't think any of them are satis-

fied."

Still, any sort of positive sign for U.S. men in tennis is bound to gain attention. They haven't had the success the women have lately, led, of course, by Serena Williams and Venus Williams, but also with major trophies in the past five years for Sloane Stephens and Sofia Kenin, and runners-up in that span such as Gauff and Madison Keys.

Consider the history: No man from the country that produced Bill Tilden and Don Budge, John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors, Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi has won any singles Grand Slam title since Andy Roddick did 19 years ago at the U.S. Open.

Then there's this: In 2013, zero men from the United States reached Wimbledon's third round -- something that hadn't happened since 1912, when no Americans entered the event.

"It's great to see everyone doing well, going deep in these tournaments," said Nakashima, a 20-year-old Californian who is ranked 56th and got past the 13th-seeded Shapovalov, a Canadian, 6-2, 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 (6) to get to the third round at the second consecutive major. "I'm just happy to be on the list."

So let's look at that list. He joins two other Californians who advanced Thursday — No. 11 seed Fritz beat Britain's Alastair Gray 6-3, 7-6 (3), 6-3, and No. 29 Brooksby beat France's Benjamin Bonzi 7-6 (3), 7-5, 6-3 — along with four U.S. men who will play in the third round Friday: No. 20 John Isner (against No. 10 Jannik Sinner of Italy), No. 23 Frances Tiafoe (against Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan), No. 30 Tommy Paul (against Jiri Vesely of the Czech Republic) and unseeded Steve Johnson (against No. 9 Cam Norrie of Britain).

The country is assured of an eighth spot in the third round because two Americans were facing each other in a match suspended because of rain and postponed until Friday. □

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